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III.—THE LOVER'S BLINDNESS.

"Love," in Shakespeare's phrase, "adds a precious seeing to the eye," and it is owing to this improvement that the lover sees in his lady charms which all others fail to see. To these others, therefore, the lover (or love) is blind; for the defects which are apparent to them do not exist for the lover. These are conventions of which literature has made wide and varied use, and in earlier articles I have shown how potent, in regard to the lover and the object of his love, has been the force of a literary tradition inherited from Greece and Rome; how, owing to this tradition, the lover has been wont to set forth the results of his "precious seeing" in a catalogue of his lady's charms. But the bystander, the one who lacks this "precious seeing," to whom the lover is blind, has his rights also, and we find, therefore, by the side of the catalogue of charms, a catalogue of defects which is, I believe, like the other an inheritance from ancient literature. This latter catalogue may serve as a mere vituperative attack upon a woman, real or imaginary, or it may be a burlesque upon the catalogue of charms,—a gentle satire upon the lover's blindness. Very often, too, the lover himself, when love is done and he sees as other men, writes a retraction of his former praise, a palinode, in which he pictures his former lady not as he had once owing to his "precious seeing" described her, but as she really is.

Just as the conventional catalogue of charms has received in modern literature its most characteristic expression at the hands of the sonneteers of the 16th century, so it is they who furnish us with the best examples of the lover's retraction, and there is hardly a poet who wrote sonnets in praise of his lady's beauty, who did not also write sonnets in which he retracts this praise. A fair sample of this form of the convention, chosen from a large number, is afforded by Barnes,¹ Parthenophil and Parthenophe, Son. XIII, in which the poet seeks a way to hate his lady, and prays his thoughts "to take enrollment / Of nature's

¹ In Arber, *The English Garner*, V, pp. 339 sq.

fault in her." . . . "They searched, and found her eyes were sharp and fiery, / A mole upon her forehead colored pale, / Her hair disordered, brown, and crispèd wiry, / Her cheeks thin speckled with a summer's male. / This told, men weened it was a pleasing tale / Her to disgrace, and make my follies fade." For the conventional catalogue of this lady's charms, cf. Son. XLVIII. This whole matter is well discussed by Lee, *Life of Shakespeare*,² who cites a large number of examples from English poets and their French models; among the latter especially noteworthy is Jodelle, *Contr' Amours*, VII: *Combien de fois mes vers ont-ils doré / Ces cheveux noirs*," etc. The conceit took form under the hands of the Italian sonneteers, and we have a characteristic example among the sonnets of Francesco Berni,³ Son. III, in which he ridicules at the same time the conventional comparison of beautiful features to precious stones. He makes the golden hair of his once loved lady silver, her silver skin, gold, her sapphire eyes, pearls, her black eye-brows, snowy white, her long, slender fingers, short and thick, her red lips, milky white, her ivory teeth, ebony and few in number, her sweet voice, discord. How far back the practice goes I am unable to say; what may be an example occurs among the poets represented in Valeriani's collection,⁴ a sonnet by Ottaviano degli Ubaldini describing an ugly woman. It is impossible to decide, however, owing to the scantiness of the record, whether this is a real retraction or simply a vituperative attack.

It was doubtless the influence of Italian or French poets which led Lydgate (?) to write his "A Satirical Poem on his Lady"⁵ in which he describes her "fro the heed to the novyl and so forth down," and Hoccleve his little poem,⁶ comparable in form to the sonnet, which begins, "Of my lady wel me reioise I may:/ Hir golden forheed is ful narw and smal, / Hir browes been lyk to dym reed coral; / And as the Ieet / Hir yen glistren ay," etc. In the latter poem we have, it may be noted, just as

² New edition, 1916, pp. 192 sq.

³ *Rime e Lettere*, Firenze, 1865.

⁴ *Poeti del Primo Secolo della Lingua Italiana*, Fir. 1816, II, p. 231.

⁵ Printed in *Percy Society*, II, p. 199. Because of the obscenity of the poem MacCracken, *E. E. T. S.*, 1911, 107, p. xxxi, argues that the poem ought not to be attributed to Lydgate.

⁶ *Ed. Furnivall, E. E. T. S.*, 61, p. xxxviii.

in Berni, a satire, also, on the conventional comparison to precious stones, and the fact that Hoccleve parodies the silver skin of the beauty catalogue in his "golden forehead" may indicate an Italian poem as his source, since "silver skin" as a mark of beauty is very common in early Italian poetry.⁷

This burlesque catalogue, however, finds its chief place in the drama and romance. The best known example is that in Shakespeare, *M. N. D.* III, 1. Of the same character is the rhapsody of Sir Tophas over Dipsas, in Lyly, *Endimion* III, 3: "What a pretty low forehead! What a tall and stately nose! What little hollow eyes! How harmless she is being toothlesse! her fingers fat and short, adorned with long nailes like a byttern!" Cf. *ib.* V, 2. In "The Woman in the Moon," on the other hand, Lyly gives us an example of the other sort of burlesque, the retraction, when Pandora, V, 1, in her anger against Gunophilus, whom a moment before she had ardently loved and praised, turns upon him and cries, "What fury made me doate upon these lookes? / Like winter's picture are his withered cheekes, / His hayre as raven's plumes," etc. From the Elizabethan romance may be cited Greene, *Menaphon's Eclogue*:⁸ "Camela dear, even as the golden ball / That Venus got, such are thy goodly eyes; / When cherries' juice is jumbled therewithal, / Thy breath is like the steam of apple-pies. / Thy lips resemble two cucumbers fair; / Thy teeth like to the tusks of fattest swine; / Thy speech is like the thunder in the air; / Would God, thy toes, thy lips, and all were mine." Sidney, *Arcadia*, Bk. I (London, 1725, I, p. 19) describes an ugly wench named Mopsa in verses the first of which burlesque the conventional comparison of beautiful women to gods and goddesses, and then, "Her forehead iacinth-like, her cheeks of opal hue, / Her twinkling eyes bedeck'd with pearl, her lips a sapphire blue: / Her hair like crapal stone; her mouth, O heavenly wide! / Her skin like burnished gold, her hands like silver ore untry'd." In another passage, Bk. II, p. 271, old Miso, the mother of Mopsa, recalls how she used to hear the young men talk of her: "O the pretty little eyes of Miso; O the fine thin lips of Miso; O the goodly

⁷ Cf. e. g. Jacopo Pugliese (*Valeriani*, I, p. 238); Jacopo de Lentino, I, p. 286.

⁸ Dyce, Greene and Peele, p. 291.

fat hands of Miso!" The former passage well illustrates the close connection between these Elizabethan writers and earlier continental poets, imitating as it does the sonnet of Berni referred to above; cf. "her mouth, O heavenly wide," with Berni's "bocca ampia celeste." Both Green and Sidney are indulging in a bit of satire on the conventional catalogue of charms employed ad nauseam by the writers of romance, themselves included. We find, Cervantes, likewise, ridiculing the practice, *Don Quixote*, Pt. II, ch. 44, Altisidora's song: "Niña soy, pulcela tierna, / Mi edad de quince no pasa, / Catorce tengo y tres meses, / te iuro en Dios y en mi anima. / No soy renca, ni soy coja, / Ni tengo nada de manca, / Los cabellos como lirios, / Que en pie por el suelo arrastran. / Y aunque es mi boca aguileña, / Y la nariz algo chata, / Ser mis dientes de topacios, / mi belleza al cielo ensalza." And still earlier Chaucer satirizes the same faults in the romances of his day; cf. his *Sir Thopas*, and Skeat's remarks in his edition, v. V, p. 184; III, p. 423.

Back of all this poetry and prose we have as source for much of its machinery if not for its spirit, the great body of French literature of the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries, and it is not surprising, therefore, that in its very earliest satire we find a striking example of the lover's retraction. In the "*Le Jeu de la Feuillie*"⁹ of Adam de la Halle, Adam, who had allowed love to interfere with his spiritual studies and had married a beautiful maiden whom he, after the conventional fashion, had met one summer's day, recovers and decides to return to the church. He tells his friends of his decision to leave his wife, and when they express their surprise, he informs them that love puts men under a spell so that "on cuide d'une truande / Bien que che soit une roine." Of this truth he himself is an illustration for the maiden whom he married, "rians, amoureuse et deugie," now appears to him to be "crasse, mautaille / Triste et tenchans"; . . . "Si crin sanloient reluisant / D'or, roit et crespé et fremiant: / Or sont kéu, noir et pendic. / Tout me sanle ore en lie mué; / Ele avoit front bien compassé, / Blanc, omni, large, fenestric: / Or le voi cresté et estroit," etc., every

⁹ Ed. Monmerqué et Michel, *Théâtre français au Moyen Age*, Paris, 1842, p. 58.

feature contrasted with its opposite, and he concludes, "Bonnes gens, ensi fui-jou pris / Par Amours qui si m'eut souspris:/Car faitures n'ot pas si beles / Comme Amours le me fist sanler."

Adam's experience may have been a very real experience, but it is evident from what has been said that in these contrasted pictures of his wife he is directing his ridicule not against her only but against the poets of his time, their erotic commonplaces, their practice of describing the ladies of their imagination by means of a catalogue of their charms. That they deserved his ridicule is apparent to the most casual reader of the literature of the time, and we may be sure that there were others just as ready as he to raise a laugh at their expense. The very completeness of Adam's catalogue is evidence that it was not the first of its kind, but whether he drew from some immediate predecessor or was inspired by a passage from Ovid, which will be quoted below, it is impossible to say. The latter is the more probable, but he did not need Ovid to tell him that the lover is blind; the conceit was just as prevalent in his day as was the practice of writing catalogues of charms—how prevalent, may be shown by three passages taken from widely different spheres. The first occurs in a romance, *Li Biaus Desconneus* (ed. Hippeau), vs. 1675 sq.; the hero, as champion of the beautiful Margerie, is to fight Gifflet for the possession of a falcon which, as a prize of beauty, is now in the hands of the latter's lady, Rose Espanie, on whom the poet comments as follows, vs. 1708 sq.: *et s'amie / Qui avoit non Rose Espanie / En costé celui cevaugoit / Un palefroi qui brief estoit; / Moult estoit et laide et froncie. / Ni a celui cui ne desfie / Qu'il la maintint por la plus bele. / Tot s'esmervellent cil et cele / Qu'amors li fait son sens muer. / Mais nus hom ne se puet garder / Qu'amors ne l' face bestorner; / La laide fait bele sanbler, / Tant set de guille et d' encanter.* The similarity to the words of Adam is apparent. The second passage is found in *Walter Map, de Nugis Curialium*, II, 12, where Walter tells the story of a certain *Edricus Wilde*, who one evening as he was returning home came upon a company of maidens, by the beauty of one of whom he was bewitched, and, says Walter, *quod recte caecus Cupido pingitur immemor omnium fantasma non pensat, ultorem non videt, et quod lumen non habet, offendit improvidus.* The third passage I quote from the *Lilium Medicinae* of *Bernardus Gor-*

donius (14th cen.), Particula II, where he discusses the malady of love: *dicebat versificator 'Omnis amans caecus, non est amor arbiter aequus. Nam deforme pectus iudicat esse decus' et alibi 'Quisquis amat ranam, ranam putat esse Dianam.'* The verses may come, as Professor Lowes, to whose learning¹⁰ I owe the reference, suggests, from some rimed treatise on medicine, but it was no doctor of medicine who first noticed such a symptom of the lover's malady. He found it and similar symptoms in the erotic literature of Greece and Rome whence came, also, as the following citations will show, the satire on the lover's blindness whether in the form of a burlesque on the beauty catalogue or of a retraction in the mouth of the lover himself.

"Not only is Ploutos blind," says Battus, the love-lorn clown to the mocking Milon in Theocritus, Id. X, 19, "but Eros also," and he straightway illustrates the truth of his remark by singing a song in praise of Bombyce, a scrawny, dark-skinned wench, beautiful, however, in his eyes: *Βομβύκα χαρίεσσα, Σύραν καλέοντί* *τυ πάντες, / ισχράν, ἀλιόκανστον · ἐγὼ δὲ μόνος μελίχλωρον.*

In the 6th Idyll again, we have the same sort of fun, when the poet makes the shepherd Daphnis sing of Galatea's coquettish wooing of the ugly Polyphemus, ending his song with the words, vs. 18-9: *ἦ γὰρ ἔρωτι / πολλάκις, ὦ Πολύφαιε, τὰ μὴ καλὰ καλὰ πέφανται.*

The former of these charming burlesques, written, we may be sure, in ridicule of the conventional love-songs of Theocritus' fellow-poets, recalls Socrates' gentle raillery in Plato, Rep. 474 D sq. Socrates, in getting at his definition of the true philosopher, asks the amorous Glaucon whether it is not usual for lovers to call by fair names features in their beloved which are really defects; one who has a snub nose is called agreeable; the hooked nose of another is called princely; the dark are said to have a manly look, the fair to be children of the gods, whereas the adjective "honey-colored" is naught but a flattering name applied to a sallow skin.

Far different from the spirit of these passages is the bitter arraignment of the folly of love in Lucretius, de R. N. 4, 1058 sq. Among its evil effects the poet counts the blindness

¹⁰ Compare his article, The Lover's Malady of Hereos in Mod. Phil. XI (1913-14), p. 499. I need hardly add that I cannot identify the versificator.

of lovers, which, vv. 1159 ff., he ridicules without stint; *nigra melichrus est, immunda et fetida acosmos, / caesia Palladium, nervosa et lignea dorcas, / parvula, pumilio, chariton mia, tota merum sal, / magna atque immanis cataplexis plenaque honoris*, etc. This passage from Lucretius may have suggested to Horace his use of the commonplace in S. I, 3, 38: *Illuc praevertamur, amatorem quod amicae / turpia decipiunt caecum, vitia aut etiam ipsa haec / delectant, veluti Balbinum polypus*¹¹ *Hagnae*. The application, however, is, as is usually the case with Horace's borrowings, entirely different.

It is apparent from these last citations that the blindness of lovers was a "commonplace of philosophy,"¹² the subject, doubtless, of serious discussion, since the lover's blindness, his habit of seeing his beloved's defects as charms, is but one illustration of man's general tendency to call foul things by fair names; cf. Juv. 8, 32: *Nanum cuiusdam Atlanta vocamus, / Aethiopem Cycnum, pravam extortamque puellam / Europen; canibus pigris scabieque vetusta / levibus et siccae lambentibus ora lucernae / nomen erit pardus tigris leo, si quid adhuc est / quod fremat in terris violentius*. Although this truth has for the moralist its serious side, still its general application by others, whether by philosophers in their learned discussions or by poets in their love-songs, offers a fair target for ridicule. And Cicero in a delightful passage, *de N. D.* I, 78 sq., takes a shot at them both.

Here Cotta, in arguing against the Epicurean doctrine that the gods have human form, asks very pertinently what human form is taken as the standard? Not all men are handsome; *deinde nobis qui concedentibus philosophis antiquis adulescentulis delectamur etiam vitia saepe iucunda sunt*. He then proceeds to give examples of this truth taking them from literature, one from the distant past, the other from the present, the blindness of the poet Alcaeus, to whom *naevus in articulo pueri—lumen videbatur*, and the blindness of Quintus Catulus, who wrote an epigram on Roscius confessing that in his eyes he seemed *pulchrior esse deo*. Huic, continues the witty Cotta, *deo*

¹¹Barnes, in the sonnet quoted, puts a mole on his lady's forehead.

¹²Cf. Morris' note on *Hor. Sat.* I, 3, 38, and on the whole matter, Lejay, *Oeuvres d'Horace, Satires*, pp. 63 sq.

pulchrior; at erat, sicuti hodie est, perversissimis oculis.—Redeo ad deos. The blindness of the lover, singing through the centuries his songs in praise of his beloved,—we may leave aside the blindness of the philosopher in respect to his gods,—is thus ridiculed by Cicero, and no ridicule was ever more charming or more effective.

Of all this material, Ovid, tenerorum lusor amorum, makes use in his own delightful fashion. In A. A. II, 657 sq., when he is instructing the young lover how to keep his lady, he tells him that: *Nominibus mollire licet mala: fusca vocetur, / Nigrior Illyrica cui pice sanguis erit; / Si paetast, Veneri similis, si rava, Minervae; / Sit gracilis, macie quae male viva suast; / Dic habilem, quaecumque brevis, quae turgida, plenam, / Et lateat vitium proximitate boni.* In the Rem. Am. 327 sq., on the other hand, he tells his pupil who would be cured of his love, to call defects by their true names: *Turgida, si plenast, si fuscast, nigra vocetur; / In gracili macies crimen habere potest, etc.*

The fact that this form of the satire on the lover's blindness occurs in Ovid is of importance not only because of his position as praeceptor amoris to the writers of the Middle Ages, but also because of the evidence which is thus afforded for the presence of the theme in the rhetorical schools. It is well known that many of Ovid's poems, especially his earlier ones, are versified suasoriae or controversiae, or scholastic theses, brought to life by his unflinching wit. That love, its character and effects, formed the subject-matter of many of these school exercises we know from the express testimony of Quintilian II, 4, 26: *solebant praeceptores mei . . . praeparare nos coniecturalibus causis cum quaerere atque exequi iuberent . . . 'quid ita crederetur Cupido puer atque volucer et sagittis ac face armatus' et similia.* Such a theme was no better fitted to sharpen the wits of the future lawyer than 'quid ita crederetur Cupido (or amator) caecus.' At all events this, or some kindred theme, Ovid may well have had in mind when he wrote Am. II, 4, in which he confesses that he will frame no false excuses to condone his failings; *non est certa meos quae forma invitet amores; / Centum sunt causae, cur ego semper amem.* In his eyes all girls are charming, the modest, the froward, the learned, the simple, the tall, the short, the dark, the fair, the girl with the locks of black as well as the girl with the locks of gold: *Seu pendent nivea pulli cervice*

capilli, / Leda fuit nigra conspicienda coma; / Seu flavent,
placuit croceis Aurora capillis: / Omnibus historiis se meus
aptat Amor.

The presence, moreover, in the Greek rhetorical schools of the Empire, of the theme of the lover's blindness is attested by its appearance in the erotic letters of this period, in those of Philostratus, for example, in whose works the philosophy of his time and rhetoric dwell together; cf. Ep. 52: οὐ τὸ ἐρᾶν νόσος, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὴ ἐρᾶν · εἰ γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄρᾶν τὸ ἐρᾶν, τυφλοὶ οἱ μὴ ἐρώντες, a very good statement of Ovid's text; cf. Aristaenetus I, 18 (Hercher, p. 149), who repeats with slight variation the passage from Plato referred to above; cf. Theophylactus, Ep. 57 (Hercher, p. 779): εἰ ἐρᾶς μὴ κατηγορεῖ τῆς ἐρωμένης ἀπρέπειαν · οὐ δύναται γὰρ μὴ τυφλώττειν ἐρώσα ψυχή. The fact that these later writers, rhetoricians all of them, merely echo the words of writers of better days is but further proof of the traditional character of the theme; so Nonnus, Dionys. XXXIV, 118, for example, Χαλκομέδην μὲν ἅπαντες, ἐγὼ δέ σε μούνος ἐνίψω / Χρυσομέδην recalls Theocr. X, 26, quoted above; and Battus' remark in this same Idyll, vs. 19: τυφλὸς δ' οὐκ αὐτὸς ὁ Πλοῦτος, / ἀλλὰ καὶ ὠφρόντιστος Ἔρως is repeated by the Byzantine, Nicetas Eugenianus, V, 219: Ἔρως δὲ τυφλός, οὐ γὰρ ὁ Πλοῦτος μόνος. On the Latin side cf., for example, Auson. Ep. LXXVII: Deformem quidam te dicunt, crispa, . . . mi pulchra es. But how far we are removed from the spirit of Theocritus!

That it was still possible, however, to make fun of the old theme in the graceful fashion of Theocritus is shown by Longus. In Bk. I, 13, of his romance he describes Daphnis as he appears to Chloe who sees him naked for the first time after his bath: ἦν δὲ ἡ μὲν κόμη μέλαινα καὶ πολλή, τὸ δὲ σῶμα ἐπίκαντον ἡλίῳ. Εἵκασεν ἂν τις αὐτὸ χρώζεσθαι τῇ σκιᾷ τῆς κόμης, ἐδόκει δὲ τῇ Χλόῃ θεωμένη καλὸς ὁ Δάφνις, καὶ ὅτι τότε πρῶτον αὐτῇ καλὸς ἐδόκει, τὸ λουτρὸν ἐνόμιζε τοῦ κάλλους αἵτιον. Compare ch. 16, where we have a description of Daphnis as he appears to his rival Dorcon, who compares his fair beauty with the dark ugliness of Daphnis: καὶ λευκὸς εἰμι ὡς γάλα, καὶ πυρρὸς ὡς θέρος μέλλον ἀμᾶσθαι. . . οὗτος δ' ἐστὶ μικρὸς καὶ ἀγένειος ὡς γυνή, καὶ μέλας ὡς λύκος. To this taunt Daphnis replies: Ἀγένειός εἰμι, καὶ γὰρ ὁ Διόνυσος μέλας, καὶ γὰρ ὁ ὑάκινθος · ἀλλὰ κρείττων καὶ ὁ Διόνυσος σατύρων καὶ ὁ ὑάκινθος κρίνων. Οὗτος δὲ καὶ πυρρὸς ὡς ἀλώπηξ, καὶ προγένειος ὡς τράγος, καὶ λευκὸς ὡς

ἐξ ἄστεος γυνή. Chloe, of course, chooses ¹³ Daphnis and just as Love has blinded her to his blemishes and to the charms of another, so to Daphnis it gives a "precious seeing" for, says Longus, ch. 17, in words that recall Shakespeare's: τότε πρῶτον (i. e. after she has kissed him) καὶ τὴν κόμην αὐτῆς ἐθαύμασεν ὅτι ξανθή, καὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ὅτι μεγάλοι καθάπερ βοός, καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον ὅτι λευκότερον ἀληθῶς καὶ τοῦ τῶν αἰγῶν γάλακτος, ὥσπερ τότε πρῶτον ὀφθαλμοὺς κτησάμενος, τὸν δὲ πρότερον χρόνον πεπηρωμένος.

In view of this evidence, therefore, it seems to me that there can be no doubt that the lover's blindness and the satire thereon which held up to ridicule his habit of seeing defects in his beloved as charms, were traditional both in ancient literature and in the schools. Of the further development of the theme, where the satire is put in the mouth of the lover himself who retracts his former praise, ancient literature does not afford many examples. They furnish sufficient evidence, however, to warrant the conclusion that the type was well recognized and traditional in certain spheres.

It is obvious that such satire could not become common, outside the comedy, at least, until there had developed a type of subjective erotic poetry in which a lover sings of his lady's charms, similar, for example, to the sonnet sequences of the 16th century, a type in which, instead of a spontaneous expression of a poet's feelings directed to one real personage, the object of a real passion, passion, person, and expression are more or less feigned, and the product for the most part, if not entirely, artificial and conventional. That conditions during the Alexandrian period were such as to produce this type of poetry there can be no doubt, but we have no written evidence that such a type did develop then. The epigram, however, as handled by Callimachus and his successors and by the writers represented in the Greek Anthology contained the germ of such a poetry, and if we arrange in order the epigrams of Meleager addressed to Zenophile, for example, we have a conventional product not unlike the sonnet sequences,—the beginning of love, description of the lady, effect of love upon the lover, divers sweet adven-

¹³ This whole passage is a delightful satire on the beauty contest, itself a literary convention with an interesting history, a study of which I hope to publish shortly.

tures, quarrels, and reconciliations. It remained for the Roman poets, however, to develop this type of subjective erotic poetry, and we can trace its growth from Catullus, who sang songs from the heart to a woman of flesh and blood, to Ovid, whose songs are composed largely of conventional motives and addressed to more or less of a lay figure. In the elegies of Tibullus and Propertius, on the other hand, fact and convention, actual events and merely literary motives are so closely commingled that it is impossible to separate them. Nor does it help toward the solution of the mystery of the latter's affair with Cynthia to find her lover, over whom her beauty never, even after death, lost its spell, implying in III, 24 that that beauty was merely the product of his verse and that his praise of it was false: *Falsast ista tuae, mulier, fiducia formae, / Olim oculis nimium facta superba meis. / Noster amor tales tribuit tibi, Cynthia, laudes: / Versibus insignem te pudet esse meis? / Mixtam te varia laudavi saepe figura, / Ut, quod non esses, esse putaret amor, / Et color est totiens roseo collatus Eoo, / Cum tibi quaesitus candor in ore foret.* It is a curious little poem which the poet must have written, it seems to me, in a playful mood, when, as he looked back upon his liaison with Cynthia, he could smile at a lover's mendacia dulcia; whereas the following poem, XXV, voices the bitterness of the same recollection. The poem, therefore, filled as it is with references to the erotic commonplaces of the elegy, affords a good example of the application of such commonplaces to a real experience.¹⁴

Whence came to Propertius the suggestion for such a retraction it is difficult to say. It may represent the reversal simply of the usual palinode, the most famous example of which was the apology of Stesichorus to Helen¹⁵; or the hint may have come from some epigram or from the comedy. It may be noted that we find such a hint in a fragment of a fabula Atellana by Pomponius:¹⁶ *A peribo, non possum pati. Porcus est quem amare coepi, pinguis non pulcher puer.*

¹⁴ One cannot mention the Roman elegy without feeling renewed grief over the untimely death of Professor Smith. Better than any one else has he interpreted the elegy for us and by his sympathy, his knowledge, his art, Propertius, Tibullus, Ovid have been made to live again.

¹⁵ Cf. Plato, *Phaedr.* 242 D; *Epis.* III, 319 E.

¹⁶ Ribbeck, *Scaen. Poes. Frag.* II, p. 251.

With Propertius' farewell to Cynthia may be compared Ovid's farewell to Corinna, *Am.* III, 12. He realizes that she is not his alone, but confesses that he can blame no one but himself, since by his praise of her in his songs he has led other lovers to her door. But poets are not on oath and he has told many tales that no one believes; *Exit in inmensum fecunda licentia vatū*, he concludes, *Obligat historica nec sua verba fide*; / *Et mea debuerat falso laudata videri* / *Femina: credulitas nunc mihi vestra nocet*. Of the conventional character of this poem there can be no doubt.

Ovid gives us, too, another treatment of this same theme in *Rem. Am.* 311 sq., a passage to which I have referred above. This is, it will be noted, essentially a lover's retraction, and in vv. 311-321 Ovid takes pains to assure his pupil that he has practiced what he preaches. When he himself was sick from love and would fain be cured, he found it helpful to dwell continually on his lady's faults, and he enhances the fun of it all by remarking in parenthesis that the girl was not so ugly as his retraction would make out: '*Quam mala*' dicebam '*nostrae sunt crura puellae!*' / *Nec tamen, ut vere confiteamur, erant*; / '*Brachia quam non sunt nostrae formosa puellae!*' / *Et tamen, ut vere confiteamur, erant*; / '*Quam brevis est*'; *nec erat*. '*Quam multum poscit amantem*'; / *Haec odio venit maxima causa meo*. / *Et mala sunt vicina bonis*; *errore sub illo* / *Pro vitio virtus crimina saepe tulit*.

This last bit of wisdom carries us back again into the rhetorical schools, for the truth that *mala sunt vicina bonis* lies at the bottom of much of our wit and humor, and it was, therefore, very thoroughly discussed by the ancient writers on rhetoric under its various aspects as irony, allegory, euphemism, antiphrasis. The best commentary on Ovid is Cicero's discussion of the orator's use of wit in *de Orat.* II, 65, 261, where he deals with fun that may arise from the use of words *quae aut ex immutata oratione ducuntur aut ex unius verbi translatione aut ex inversione verborum*; cf. Quint. VIII, 6, 54. Certain examples of such uses of words no doubt became typical, among them the passage from Juvenal which I have quoted above which is referred to by Isidore of Seville, *Orig.* I, 36, 24, under his treatment of antiphrasis. It was by this avenue, therefore, I think, that the lover's habit of calling defects charms and then

retracting his praise, made its way into the school. That examples of the habit were taken largely from the comedy we may assume; the passage I have quoted from Pomponius is evidence thereof, and a remark of Cicero, l. c. 274, is, I think, conclusive. He gives some examples of *dissimulatio*, *cum honesto verbo vitiosa res appellatur*, one of them, be it noted, concerning an ugly woman, and characterizes such jokes as *subabsurda*, *sed . . . saepe ridicula*, *non solum mimis perapposita*, and as belonging to the genus *mimicum*. The passage which I quoted from Pomponius may, therefore, be considered typical.

In the light of this evidence, then, and I would especially emphasize the words of Cicero, it may not be chance that the earliest examples of the satire on the lover's blindness occur in Plato and Theocritus, in the works of both of whom the mime looms large.¹⁷ The influence of the mime may, of course, be easily exaggerated, but we are sure that the *mimus* was the ancestor of the mediæval *jongleur*, and that from the mime came most of the shorter forms of satiric poetry current in the Middle Ages.¹⁸ It may well be, therefore, that Adam de la Halle, whose *Jeu* certainly possesses all the characteristics of the mime, owed to the tradition of this popular form of drama the suggestion for his retraction if not his material. The latter may have come from Ovid, from the passages which I have quoted above; Adam is, at least, merely carrying out the precepts of the master that the lover who wishes to recover from his sickness,—and Adam did so wish,—should call a spade a spade,—which Adam does. There is, however, no need to assume any one definite source. Such material was common property, traditional, as my examples show, both in school and out.

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¹⁷ Compare Reich, *Der Mimus*, I, pp. 10 sq.; 296 sq.

¹⁸ Compare on this matter, Faral, *Les Jongleurs en France au Moyen Age*, pp. 10 sq.; 214 sq.